

CONTENTS

1. The history of smoking

2. The history of smoking in Islam

3. Causes of smoking

4. Proof of smoking in Islam

*SMOKING
IN
ISLAM*

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CONTENTS

1. The history of smoking 3
2. The harms of smoking 4
3. Cancer caused by smoking 5
4. Proof of the prohibition of smoking 5

INTRODUCTION

The unanimity of intellectuals on the pursuing of good and discarding of harm is a known fact. From the beginning of time, life revolves upon this accepted principle from all intellectuals and thinkers.

However the intellects of people differ regarding that which is beneficial and harmful. This is because of differences of the human mental faculties in strength, weakness, soundness and deficiency. There are so many beneficial things which people understand to be harmful and leave aside, because of their suspicion of it's harm. On the contrary there are so many harmful things which people advance towards believing them to be beneficial, therefore practising upon them. This is due to the ambiguity of so many things whose reality is not apparent and therefore not understood. Is it something beneficial which has to be pursued or something harmful which has to be abstained from and discarded? The following hadith of Nabi Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam substantiates this fact:

"Halaal and haraam are evident and between them (halaal and haraam) are doubtful things which many people are unaware of."

Verily that which is *halaal* is beneficial and that which is *haraam* is harmful. From amongst *halaal* and *haraam* are those things whose benefit and harm are self evident. For example the benefit of honey and the harm of poison or the benefit of doing good and the harm of evil actions. But between these are many things whose benefit or harm are not known (to everyone) but to people of experience, correct understanding and intellect. From amongst these is the subject of smoking whose reality is vague and hidden from many people.

Therefore I decided to quote the opinions of intellectuals concerning this issue from different angles so that it becomes apparent, it's reality comes to light and it's vagueness is removed.

THE HISTORY OF SMOKING

Smoking as it is known today came to light in approximately 1492 (AD). This was when some Spanish sailors found the tobacco plant at the time of the discovery of the American continent.

Smoking spread menacingly in Europe towards the end of the sixteenth century. This condition prevailed until the British King, James I launched an attack by passing a law against smoking in the year 1604. In Russia a severe resolution was passed in the year 1634. It stated that the noses of those who purchase, sell or

smoke tobacco will be severed, they will be lashed and if they happened to return to smoking they will be banished to Siberia or executed.

During the seventeenth century, Denmark, Sweden, Sicily, Austria and Hungary passed regulations prohibiting smoking. Smoking first came to light in the Islamic states towards the end of the hundred and tenth year of hijrah and the first people to import it to these places were the Christians.

WHAT DO CIGARETTES COMPRISE OF?

Cigarettes comprise of many poisonous ingredients of which nicotine is not the only poisonous ingredient as many people misconceive, but includes other ingredients whose harms are more dangerous than nicotine. From amongst it's poisonous ingredients are:

1. Carbon monoxide whose poisonous effect is known.
2. Poisonous lead which accumulates and the body fails to break it up.
3. Nicotine: This is a very poisonous substance so much so that a mere 50 mg of it can kill a person if it is injected into the arteries.
4. Radio-active polonium which settles in the lungs of the smoker and doesn't separate from it.
5. Tar: This is a sticky yellowish substance which makes the teeth yellow, causes tooth decay and inflammation of the gums. This is one of the most harmful ingredients.
6. Arsenic which is used as an insecticide, 10% of which settles on the lung.
7. Spirits and flavouring which are added by manufacturers to keep the tobacco moist.
8. Benzene vapour which plays a great role in lung cancer.

THE HARMS OF SMOKING

Mohammed Abdul Ghaffaar Al Afghani in his book "Ninety nine harms of smoking" has said that smoking results in many sicknesses which doctors have explained and they all amount to ninety nine.

Doctor Salahudeen Abdur - Rabbe Nabi, a neuro surgeon in Cairo says: "When a person becomes enslaved to the habit of smoking, it has a very harmful effect on the smoker's health, especially to his heart. As a result his heart beat and blood circulation becomes unstable and he experiences drowsiness from time to time due to the shrinking of his brain arteries. Sometimes during old age he suffers from high blood pressure and angina. Similarly his digestive and respiratory systems are harmed and the smoker loses his appetite. He is also afflicted by a cough which is

known as the smoker's cough. When his nervous system is affected the smoker feels a prickly sensation, a numbness in his limbs and also a pain in the nerves."

In the annual conference of the American Doctors Council which took place in Chicago in 1966, the main topic discussed was the harms of smoking. Doctors, who were aware of the role that smoking played in lung cancer, became alarmed when they heard that the least harm smoking causes is that it arouses anxiety. Doctor Edward Kwellner Hammond, head of statistics in the Cancer Association of America said: "Verily lung cancer which is caused by smoking cigarettes is not so serious in comparison to the injury caused by smoking with other means." It is stated in the ninth edition of "World of Knowledge" magazine that the time has come wherein it has become necessary to expose all the harms of smoking. It should also be realised that these despicable substances even cause death.

It is also necessary to elucidate the harms of smoking in the hope of saving many intelligent and educated youth, who will be astonished on how much has been written regarding this topic.

It is also stated in the above-mentioned magazine under the following heading:

CANCER CAUSED BY SMOKING

This fatal illness is the culmination of many illnesses which are the result of thin blood and other sicknesses which are related to the blood vessels. All these are connected to this loathsome substance. However, lung cancer is the most likely outcome of smoking.

Lung cancer was a very rare disease but the end of this century witnessed a high rise in its occurrence, primarily in men and thereafter in women.

In the beginning of the sixties, the death rate due to lung cancer increased compared to before.

Smoking also yields other health hazards besides its general and specific economic harms.

PROOF FOR THE PROHIBITION OF SMOKING

Smoking did not exist in the time of Rasool Sallallaahu Alahi Wasallam, but our magnificent deen has laid down general principles from which many laws are derived. From these principles, the Ulema (Allah's mercy be upon them) have come to the conclusion that smoking is *haram*.

These proofs which indicate this are either verses from the Quraan or narrations of Nabi Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam. From amongst them are, briefly:

The statement of Allah Ta'aala describing the mission of Nabi Sallallaahu Alaihi Wasallam.

He commands them to do good and stops them from evil and makes halaal for them that which is pure and makes haraam upon them that which is impure.
[QURAAN 7: 157]

This verse clearly shows pure things to be *halaal* and impure things to be *haram*. An intelligent person would no doubt regard smoking to be from among the impure things. The literal meaning of impurity is a bad thing whose taste and smell are disliked. These two qualities are found in cigarettes.

And do not squander (your wealth). Indeed the spendthrifts are the brothers of Shaytaan.
[QURAAN 17:27]

Another verse of the Quraan-e-kareem states:

And do not waste, for indeed Allah does not love those who waste.
[QURAAN 6:141]

A Hadith of Nabi Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam states:

And disliked for you is hearsay, excessive questioning and the squandering of wealth.

Without any doubt, in the purchasing of cigarettes is destruction, wasting and squandering of wealth. All these are not permissible according to the consensus of the jurists.

A Hadith of Nabi Sallallaahu Alaihi Wasallam states:

Whomsoever eats garlic or onion (raw) should keep away from us, keep far from our masjids and should sit at home.

This is concerning the odour of these two vegetables, so what about the repulsive stench of cigarettes which harms the smoker and irritates other people? It's foul smell is more aggravating than the smell of garlic and onion.

A verse of the Holy Quraan states:

And do not throw yourself into destruction with your own hands.

[QURAAN 2: 195]

Smoking causes fatal sicknesses for example, lung cancer, tuberculosis etc.

In another verse of the Holy Quraan, Allah says:

And do not kill yourselves.

[QURAAN 4: 29]

Nabi Sallallaahu Alaihi Wasallam said: "Whomsoever drinks poison, thereby killing himself, will sip this poison forever and ever in the fire of Jahannam."

Cigarettes consist of many poisonous substances and furthermore, the smoker indulges in a slow suicidal act by smoking this poison.

A Hadith of Nabi Sallallaahu Alahi Wasallam states:

A person should not commit such acts which are harmful and cause harm to others.

Smoking is purely a conglomeration of harming oneself and causing harm to others as was explained above.

After all this if anyone arrogantly denies these proofs which I have presented and explained, then he should fear Allah from his heart.

Together with that he should be aware that the least which can be said of smoking is that it is amongst the doubtful things concerning which Nabi Sallallaahu Alaihi Wasallam explained that the person who involves himself in these (doubtful) things, involves himself in haraam. Nabi Sallallaahu Alaihi Wasallam has commanded us to stay away from these things. He said:

"Halaal and haraam are evident and between them there are doubtful things which many people are not aware of. Whosoever, abstains from doubtful things has protected his deen and whosoever indulges in doubtful things indulges in haraam.

A shepherd who grazes (his flock) around a pasture will very soon find himself in it. Behold, every king has a pasture. Behold, the pastures of Allah are the things He has declared *haraam*. Verily there is a piece of flesh in the body. When it is on the correct path, the whole body will be on the correct path, and

when it deviates, so does the whole body deviate from the right path. Indeed that is the heart.

- Smoking is the cause of 140 000 Chinese dying every year and 90% of every 660 are infected with lung cancer in one of the hospitals for smokers in Shanghai.
- The death toll caused by smoking is higher than that by wars and car accidents.
- Smoking is the angel of death in this era.
- Cigarettes -- angina + blood clotting + blood pressure + cancer = death.

The people responded to me: It hadn't been permitted and neither had it been prohibited.

I then replied: At least one of the interpretations is indeed inevitable. It is beneficial or harmful - clarify this for me?

They responded: Certainly harmful - there was no contesting argument.

We then indicated: Undoubtedly, the primary principle is then applicable - i.e. Prohibition (applies) in all that which harms.

Is there not in the (Quranic) verse of (the chapter) 'A'yaat (sufficient) reproof to one who seeks the truth, against all evil forces.

If you negate this (claim) to be of the harmful class, then you are negligent except by proper and clear presentational evidence that (proves) whence you have deduced such a view while you simultaneously attest its intention - which is then followed by tangibility of the link.

The prohibition against wastage has clearly been revealed (in the Quran). And also against destroying wealth in futile avenues. Speculating ventures have been revealed with these (implications) consolidated with (theoretical) prophetic teachings of the highest intellectual sources. Now then has it become permissible for you to ignore it by fire.

People - is there any answer to my questions?
Intelligent Being - in all important affairs set aside from yourself that which leaves you in doubt and betake to all that which does not cause you doubt.

Sheikh Haafiz bin Ahmed Al-Hakamy (poetically) describes the tobacco plant.

An incurable disease and a (cause of) weakness in (human) strengths. It has a detestable odour that detracts from the virtues of manliness.

I questioned them: Is this drug permissible unto you - (to be included) from the pure categories that have been permitted by inferences (from the Islamic Legal texts).

The people responded to me: It hadn't been permitted and neither has it been prohibited.

I then replied: At least one of the interpretations is indeed inevitable. It is beneficial or harmful - clarify this for us?

They responded: Certainly harmful - there are no contesting arguments.

We then indicated: Undoubtedly, the primary principal is then applicable - i.e. Prohibition (applies) in all that which harms.

Is there not in the (Quraanic) verse of (the chapter) *A'raaf* (sufficient) rebuke to one who seeks the truth, against all evil forms.

If you negate this (plant) to be of the harmful class, then you are unrightful except by proper and clear presentational evidence that (proves) whence you have deduced such a view while you simultaneously attest its intoxication - which is then followed by languidity of the limbs.

The prohibition against wastage has clearly been revealed (in the Quraan).
And also against destroying wealth in futile avenues.
Elucidating verses have been revealed with these (implications) consolidated with *Ahaadith* (prophetic teachings) of the highest inferential sources.
How then has it become permissible for you to ignite it by fire.

O People - is there any answer to my questions?

O Intelligent Being - in all important affairs set aside from yourself that which place you in doubt and betake to all that which does not cause you doubt.

Conclusion

I ask Allah, The Almighty to give us the ability to practise good actions and to protect us from slips and errors and to make us from amongst those who listen carefully to speech and follow it correctly. May Allah send salutations upon our leader, Muhammad, his family and all his companions and those that follow them correctly till the day of Judgement.

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